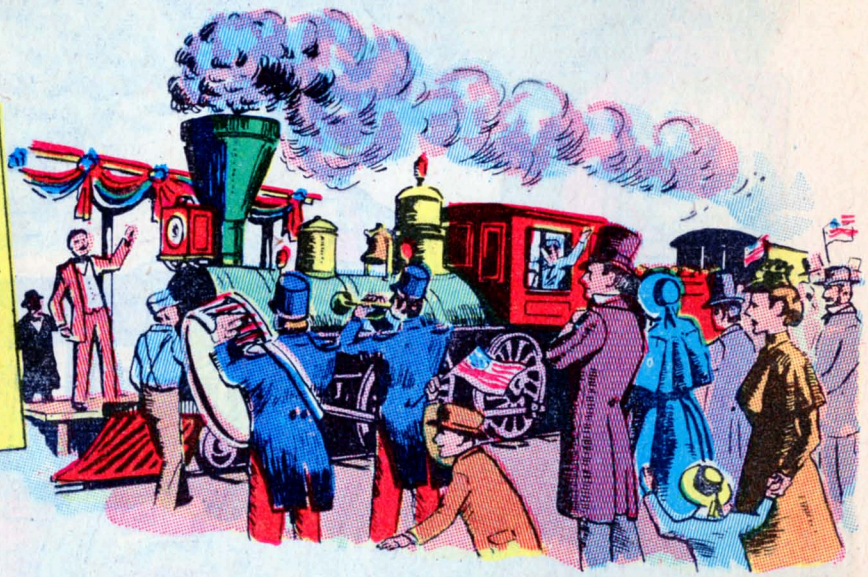
THE IRON HORSE GOES TO WAR

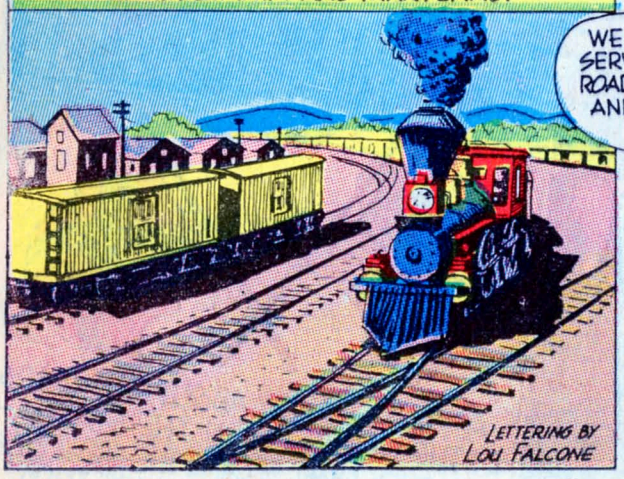
ON APRIL 12, 1861, CONFEDERATE ARTILLERY OPENED FIRE ON FORT SUMTER IN THE HARBOR OF CHARLESTON, SOUTH CAROLINA. THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES HAD BEGUN.

THREE DAYS LATER (APRIL 15) CAME THE DECLARATION BY PRESIDENT ABRAHAM LINCOLN OF A STATE OF REBELLION. LINCOLN RECOGNIZED THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF RAIL TRANSPORTATION AND, AS OF THAT SAME DAY, TOOK OVER CERTAIN RAILROADS IN THE NORTH SO THAT SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT FOR THE FEDERAL ARMIES COULD BE GIVEN PRIORITY OF MOVEMENT.

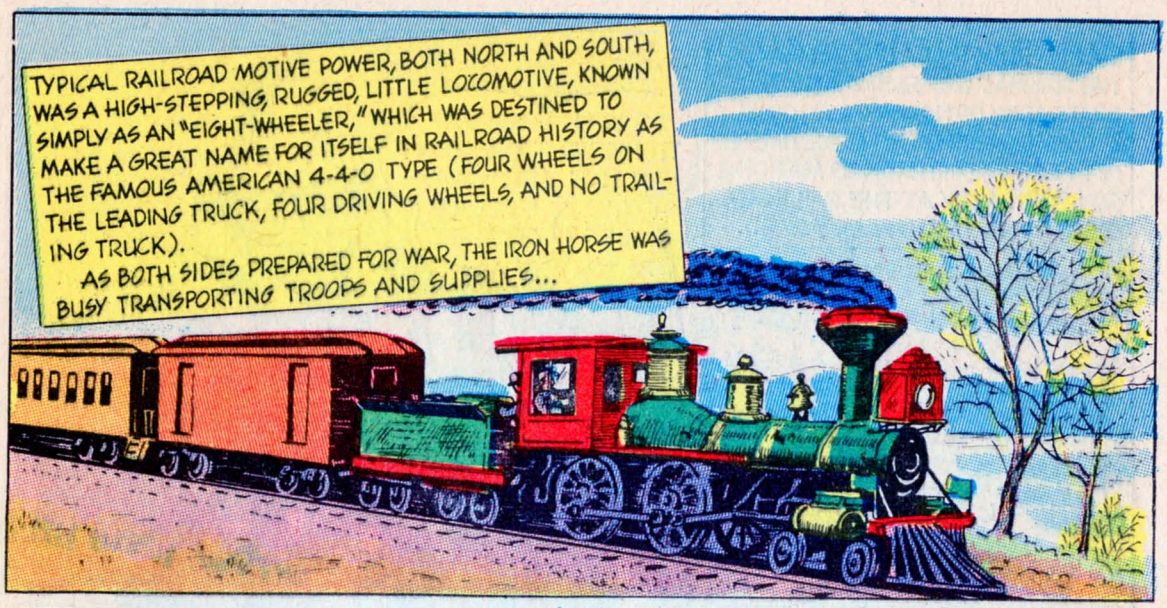
EXPERIENCED RAILROAD OFFICIALS WERE APPOINTED GOVERNMENT AGENTS TO SUPERVISE THE MOVEMENT OF ARMY PERSONNEL AND SUPPLIES. SOON TROOPS FOR THE DEFENSE OF WASHINGTON BEGAN TO ARRIVE IN THE CAPITAL BY RAIL...

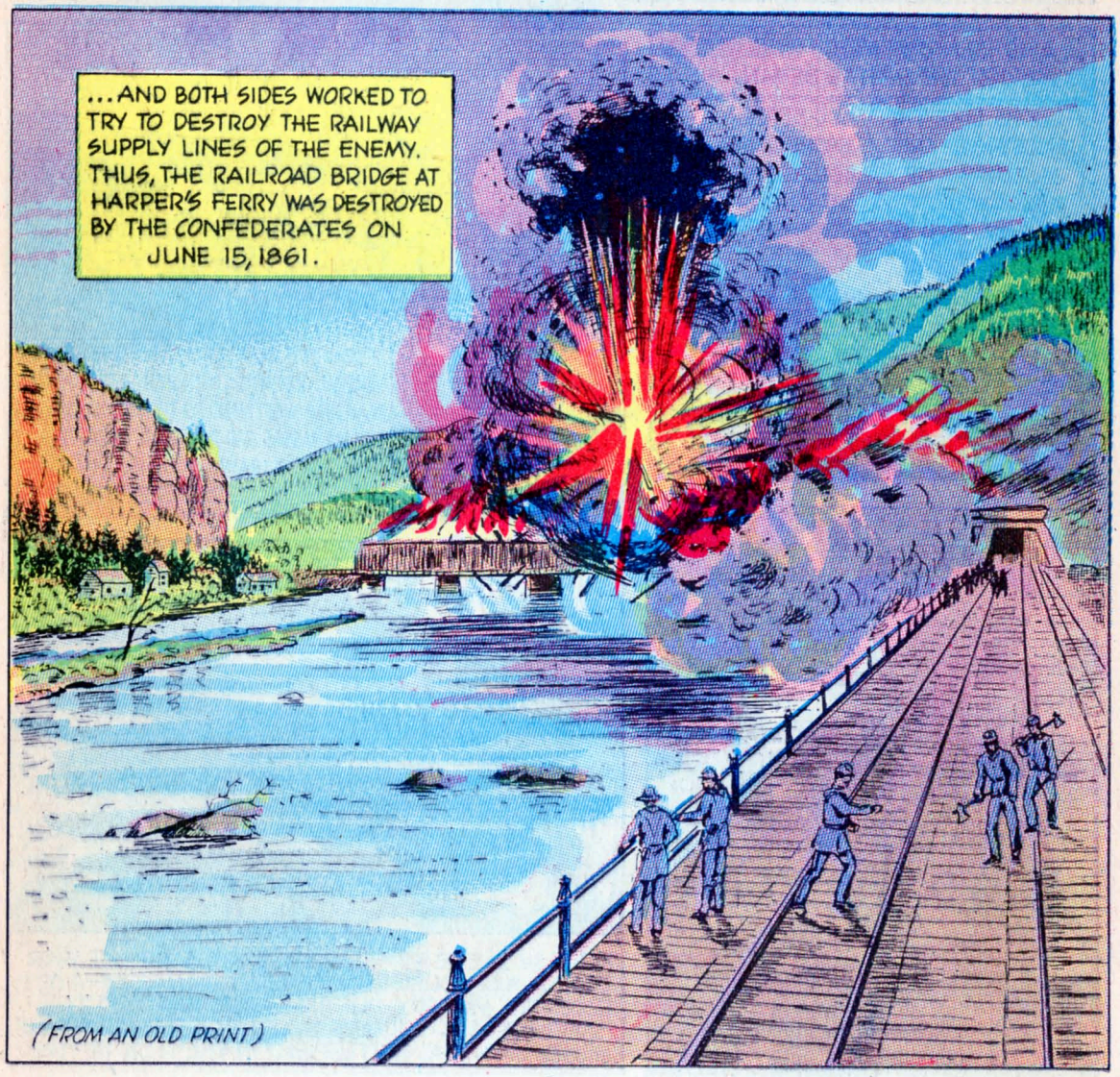


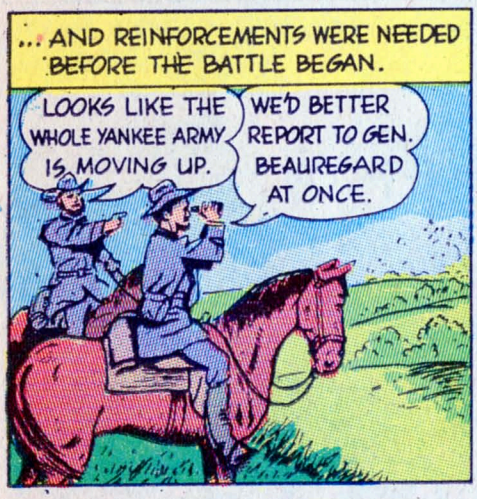
...AND TRAINLOADS OF MILITARY STORES WERE RUSHED TO DESIGNATED POINTS IN PENNSYLVANIA AND MARYLAND.

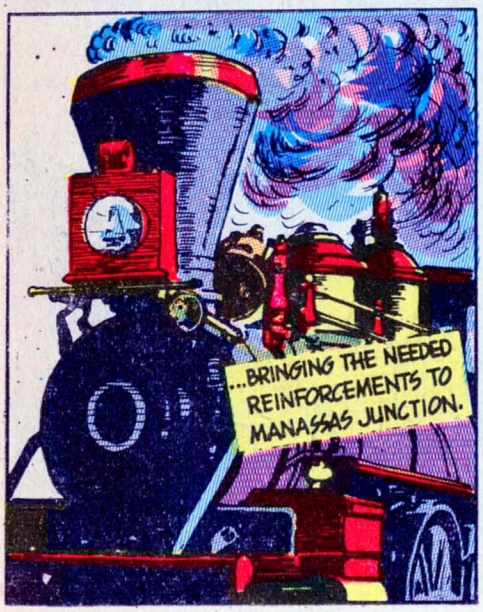


MEANWHILE, IN THE SOUTH, THE CONFEDERATES ALSO REALIZED THE IMPORTANCE OF RAILROADS AND ON APRIL 26, 1861, KEY SOUTHERN RAILROAD OFFICIALS MET TO MAKE PLANS FOR THE WAR EFFORT.


TYPICAL RAILROAD MOTIVE POWER, BOTH NORTH AND SOUTH, WAS A HIGH-STEPPING, RUGGED, LITTLE LOCOMOTIVE, KNOWN SIMPLY AS AN "EIGHT-WHEELER," WHICH WAS DESTINED TO MAKE A GREAT NAME FOR ITSELF IN RAILROAD HISTORY AS THE FAMOUS AMERICAN 4-4-0 TYPE (FOUR WHEELS ON THE LEADING TRUCK, FOUR DRIVING WHEELS, AND NO TRAILING TRUCK).
AS BOTH SIDES PREPARED FOR WAR, THE IRON HORSE WAS BUSY TRANSPORTING TROOPS AND SUPPLIES...


...AND BOTH SIDES WORKED TO TRY TO DESTROY THE RAILWAY SUPPLY LINES OF THE ENEMY. THUS, THE RAILROAD BRIDGE AT HARPER'S FERRY WAS DESTROYED BY THE CONFEDERATES ON JUNE 15, 1861.
(FROM AN OLD PRINT)





ON JULY 21, THE FIRST GREAT BATTLE OF THE WAR TOOK PLACE—BULL RUN OR FIRST MANASSAS—A CONFEDERATE VICTORY DUE IN LARGE PART TO THE RAILROAD WHICH SUCCEEDED IN PLACING REINFORCEMENTS UPON THE BATTLEFIELD IN THE NICK OF TIME.

LEADERS OF THE NORTH AND SOUTH REALIZED THE IRON HORSE HAD BECOME A MILITARY WEAPON OF GREAT IMPORTANCE.

RAILROADS HAVE INTRODUCED A NEW AND IMPORTANT ELEMENT INTO WAR BY THE GREAT FACILITIES THUS GIVEN FOR CONCENTRATING TROOPS AND BY CREATING NEW LINES OF OPERATION.

THE PRESIDENT IS AWARE OF THE MILITARY VALUE OF RAILROADS, GENERAL McCLELLAN.

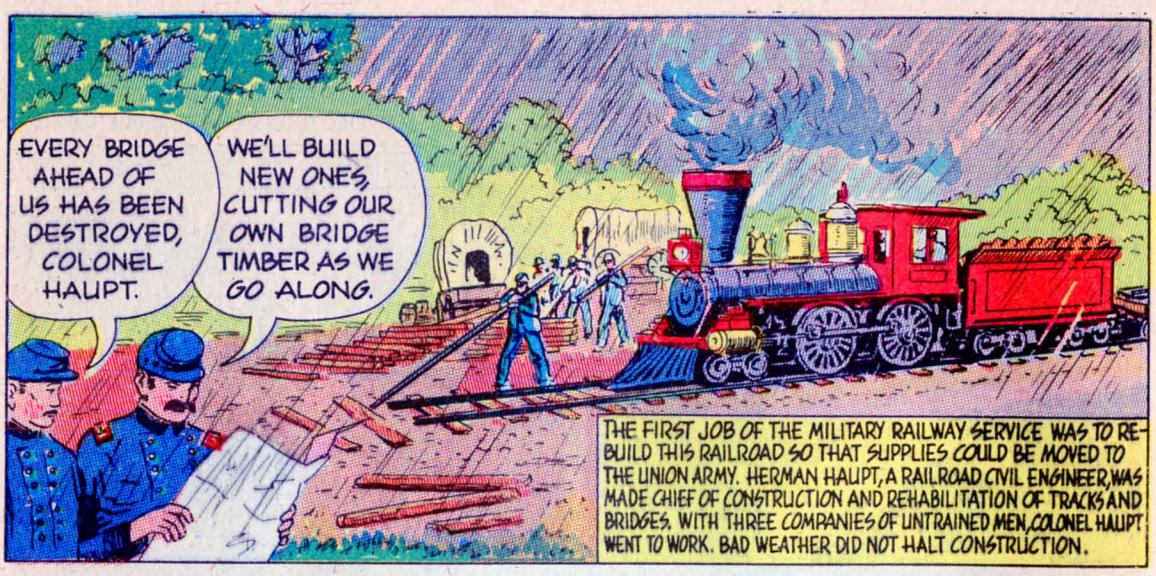
CONFEDERATE GENERAL ALBERT SIDNEY JOHNSTON, TAKING COMMAND OF THE KENTUCKY AND TENNESSEE BORDER REGION, BASED HIS TROOPS ON THE RAIL LINES.

TO INSURE PROMPT AND EFFICIENT TRANSPORTATION FOR THE UNION FORCES, PRESIDENT LINCOLN, EARLY IN 1862, ORDERED THE CREATION OF THE FIRST ORGANIZED MILITARY RAILWAY SERVICE WHICH HAS BEEN AN INTEGRAL PART OF THE U.S. ARMY EVER SINCE...

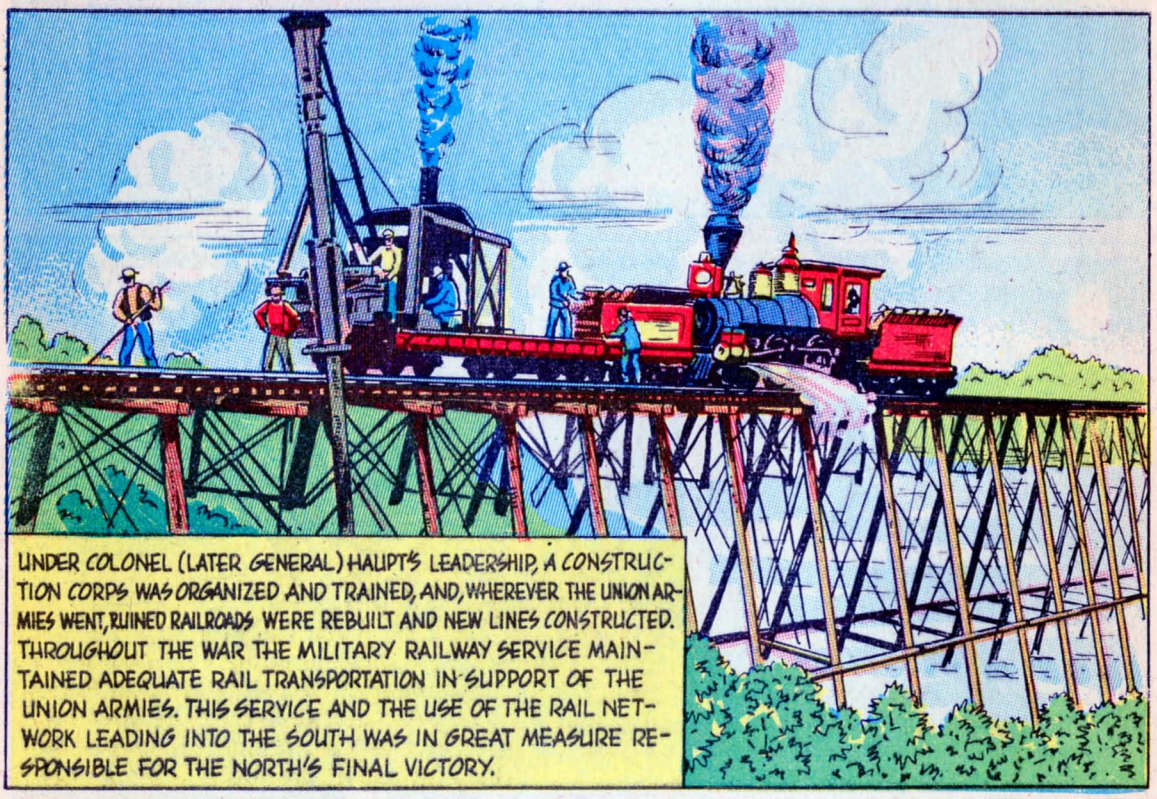
U.S. MILITARY R.R.

... AND APPOINTED COLONEL (LATER BRIGADIER GENERAL.) D. C. McCALLUM MILITARY DIRECTOR AND SUPERINTENDENT OF RAILROADS.

AS McCALLUM TOOK OVER HIS DUTIES, THE CONFEDERATES, FALLING BACK TOWARD RICHMOND, DESTROYED THE RAIL LINE BEHIND THEM SO THAT THE UNION ARMY COULD NOT USE IT.

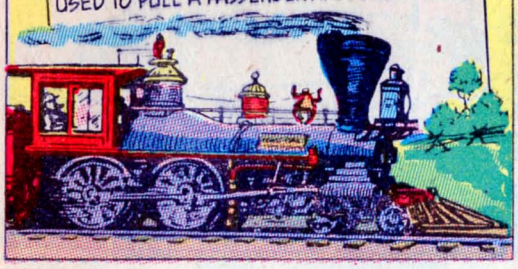

EVERY BRIDGE AHEAD OF US HAS BEEN DESTROYED, COLONEL HAUPT.
WE'LL BUILD NEW ONES, CUTTING OUR OWN BRIDGE TIMBER AS WE GO ALONG.
THE FIRST JOB OF THE MILITARY RAILWAY SERVICE WAS TO REBUILD THIS RAILROAD SO THAT SUPPLIES COULD BE MOVED TO THE UNION ARMY. HERMAN HAUPT, A RAILROAD CIVIL ENGINEER, WAS MADE CHIEF OF CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION OF TRACKS AND BRIDGES. WITH THREE COMPANIES OF UNTRAINED MEN, COLONEL HAUPT WENT TO WORK. BAD WEATHER DID NOT HALT CONSTRUCTION.

ONE BRIDGE, 400 FEET LONG AND 100 FEET HIGH, WAS FINISHED IN NINE DAYS. SUPPLY TRAINS WERE SOON ROLLING.


UNDER COLONEL (LATER GENERAL) HAUPT'S LEADERSHIP, A CONSTRUCTION CORPS WAS ORGANIZED AND TRAINED, AND, WHEREVER THE UNION ARMIES WENT, RUINED RAILROADS WERE REBUILT AND NEW LINES CONSTRUCTED. THROUGHOUT THE WAR THE MILITARY RAILWAY SERVICE MAINTAINED ADEQUATE RAIL TRANSPORTATION IN SUPPORT OF THE UNION ARMIES. THIS SERVICE AND THE USE OF THE RAIL NETWORK LEADING INTO THE SOUTH WAS IN GREAT MEASURE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE NORTH'S FINAL VICTORY.

IN THE SPRING OF 1862, NORTHERN AND SOUTHERN ARMIES MOVED AGAINST EACH OTHER ON WIDELY SCATTERED FRONTS, DESTROYING OR CAPTURING RAILROADS WHEREVER POSSIBLE. ONE OF THE MOST SPECTACULAR THRUSTS WAS AIMED AT THE RAILROAD CONNECTING ATLANTA WITH CHATTANOOGA, TENNESSEE. ON THIS LINE, THE FAMOUS EPISODE KNOWN AS THE "CHASE OF THE GENERAL" TOOK PLACE.

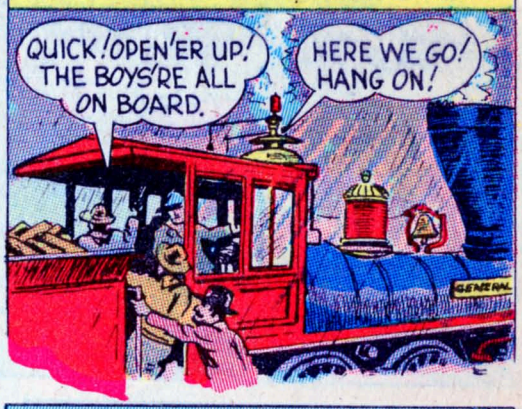
THE GENERAL WAS A FAST-WHEELING WOODBURNING LOCOMOTIVE OF THE 4-4-0 TYPE USED TO PULL A PASSENGER AND MAIL TRAIN.



THE MORNING OF APRIL 12 WAS DARK AND RAINY AS THE GENERAL PULLED OUT OF ATLANTA. ON BOARD WERE 21 UNION SOLDIERS—ALL RAILROADERS—DRESSED AS CIVILIANS AND LED BY CAPTAIN JAMES J. ANDREWS. THEIR PLAN WAS TO STEAL THE ENGINE AND DASH NORTHWARD, CUTTING THE CONFEDERATE LINE OF COMMUNICATION TO CHATTANOOGA. AS THE TRAIN NEARED BIG SHANTY*...

...WHERE A CONFEDERATE TRAINING CAMP WAS LOCATED, A STOP WAS MADE FOR BREAKFAST. THE CREW AND PASSENGERS HURRIED INTO THE TRACKSIDE RESTAURANT.

CONDUCTOR W.A. FULLER AND HIS ENGINEER, JEFF CAIN, HAD TAKEN SEATS AT THE TABLE WHEN FULLER, WHO WAS FACING THE WINDOW TOWARD THE TRACK, SAW SEVERAL MEN CLIMBING INTO THE LOCOMOTIVE CAB...



FULLER RAN OUTSIDE, FOLLOWED BY THE REST OF THE TRAIN CREW, BUT THE RAIDERS HAD UNCOUPLED THE ENGINE AND THREE HEAD-END BOXCARS FROM THE COACHES, AND WERE SPEEDING UP THE TRACK WITH THE GENERAL'S THROTTLE WIDE OPEN. FULLER AND ANOTHER RAILROAD MAN RAN AFTER THE TRAIN FOR TWO MILES...

...AND MET A TRACK GANG WHO TOLD THEM THAT THE RAIDERS HAD TAKEN THEIR TOOLS AND CUT THE TELEGRAPH WIRE. TAKING THE HAND CAR, FULLER KEPT UP THE CHASE, AND THOUGH DERAILED ONCE AT A PLACE WHERE ANDREWS' MEN HAD LOOSENED A RAIL, SOON REACHED ETOWAH STATION.

THERE ON A SIDE TRACK WAS THE **YONAH**, AN OLD YARD ENGINE, AND FULLER LOST NO TIME GETTING IT OUT ON THE MAIN LINE. JOINED BY SEVERAL SOLDIERS, FULLER AND THE ENGINE CREW PURSUED THE RAIDERS.

CAN'T YOU GO ANY FASTER?

OLD YONAH'S DOING THE BEST SHE CAN, CAP'N.

WHAT ARE YO'ALL DOING WITH FULLER'S TRAIN?

TRACKS AT KINGSTON WERE BLOCKED BY TRAINS WAITING FOR SOUTHBOUND EXTRAS TO ARRIVE OVER THE SINGLE TRACK LINE. THE RAILROAD MEN WERE SUSPICIOUS OF THE STRANGERS, BUT ANDREWS PUT ON A BOLD FRONT...

WE'RE CARRYING AMMUNITION. YOU'LL HAVE TO GET THOSE TRAINS OUT OF OUR WAY.

YOU CAN'T MOVE TILL THE SOUTHBOUND EXTRAS PULL IN.

... AND AFTER AN HOUR'S DELAY, THE TRACK WAS CLEARED, AND THE STOLEN TRAIN WAS SPEEDING NORTHWARD AGAIN.

THEY LEFT KINGSTON A FEW MINUTES AGO. THEY CAN'T BE FAR AHEAD OF US, NOW.

BUT CONDUCTOR FULLER WAS CLOSE BEHIND, HAVING TAKEN AN ENGINE AND ONE CAR FROM A TRAIN AT KINGSTON. SOLDIERS AND RAILROADERS WERE ABOARD.

FOUR MILES UP THE LINE, ANDREWS' RAIDERS STOPPED LONG ENOUGH TO CUT THE TELEGRAPH WIRES AGAIN AND TAKE UP A RAIL.

HERE THEY COME! BACK TO THE ENGINE—QUICK!

I'LL BE RIGHT DOWN, CAPTAIN.

REACHING THE BREAK IN THE TRACK, FULLER ABANDONED THE ENGINE AND TOOK UP THE CHASE ON FOOT. SOON THE CONFEDERATES MET A SOUTHBOUND FREIGHT TRAIN.

THAT TRAIN JUST PASSED US. WE WENT ON THE SIDETRACK.

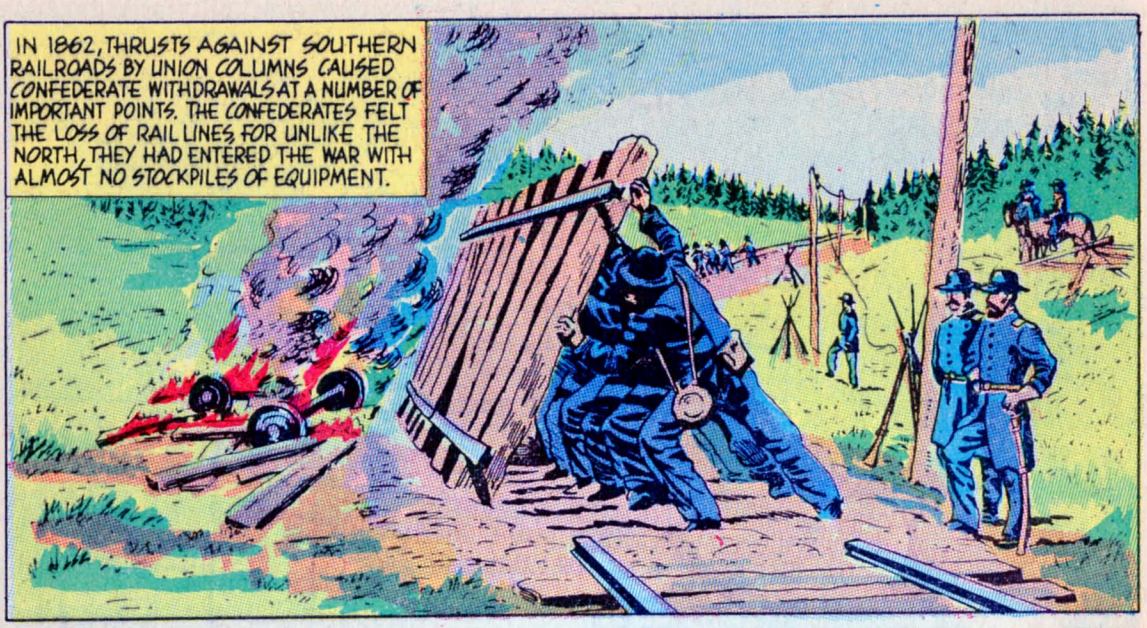
SURE, FULLER! WE'LL UNCOUPLE THE CARS AT THE FIRST SIDING AND RUN IN REVERSE.

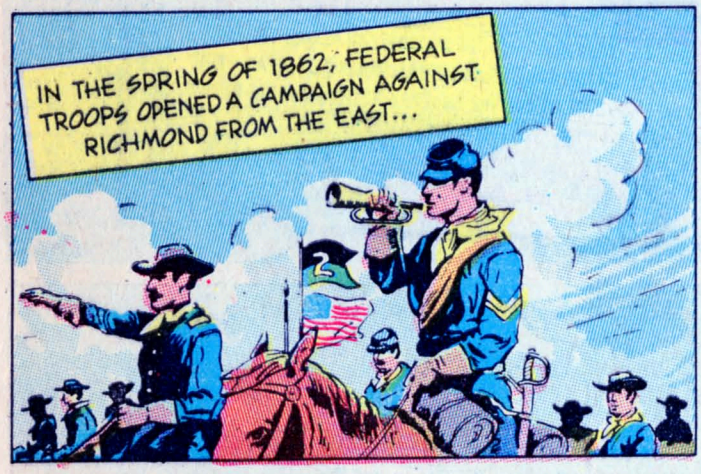
YANKEES STOLE MY TRAIN—WE NEED YOUR ENGINE.

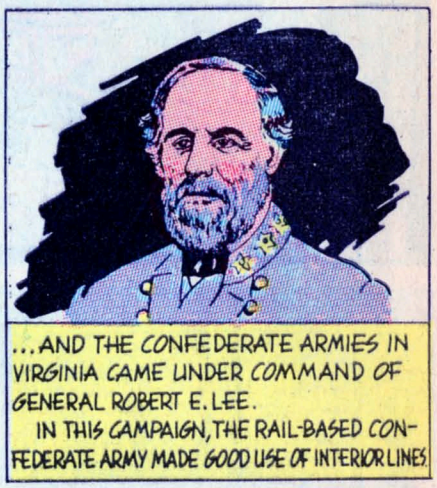
WITH THE ENGINE RUNNING BACKWARD, THEY PURSUED THE RAIDERS AT HIGH SPEED. TWO BOXCARS LEFT ON THE TRACK BY ANDREWS WERE PUSHED ONTO A SIDING.

SOON THE GENERAL WAS SIGHTED.
THE RAIDERS SET FIRE TO THE LAST BOXCAR AND LEFT IT ON A BRIDGE.
WE'RE OUT OF FUEL AND WATER.
THEY'RE GAINING FAST. WHAT'LL WE DO?
PUT 'ER IN REVERSE AND JUMP! EVERY MAN FOR HIMSELF!
BUT THE TEXAS PUSHED THE BURNING CAR ACROSS THE BRIDGE AND OUT OF THE WAY. THE GENERAL RAN OUT OF STEAM—THE CHASE WAS OVER, BEFORE THE RAIDERS COULD DAMAGE THE RAILROAD.

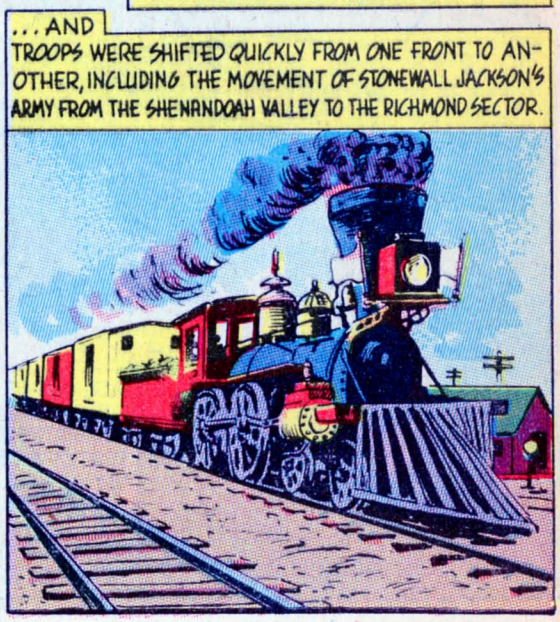
DURING THE CAMPAIGNS OF THE SPRING OF 1862, AS THE UNION FORCES SOUGHT TO GAIN CONTROL OF THE MISSISSIPPI RIVER, THE CONFEDERATES RECEIVED THEIR SUPPLIES BY RAIL. ANDREWS' RAID WAS PART OF A FEDERAL PLAN TO CUT THESE IMPORTANT SUPPLY LINES. THE DAY BEFORE ANDREWS RACED NORTHWARD ON THE GENERAL, UNION TROOPS DASHED EASTWARD TO HUNTSVILLE, ALABAMA, AND CAPTURED YARDS, SHOPS, AND ROLLING STOCK OF THE MEMPHIS & CHARLESTON RAILROAD. A VITAL SOUTHERN SUPPLY LINE WAS SEVERED.


IN 1862, THRUSTS AGAINST SOUTHERN RAILROADS BY UNION COLUMNS CAUSED CONFEDERATE WITHDRAWALS AT A NUMBER OF IMPORTANT POINTS. THE CONFEDERATES FELT THE LOSS OF RAIL LINES, FOR UNLIKE THE NORTH, THEY HAD ENTERED THE WAR WITH ALMOST NO STOCKPILES OF EQUIPMENT.


IN THE SPRING OF 1862, FEDERAL TROOPS OPENED A CAMPAIGN AGAINST RICHMOND FROM THE EAST...

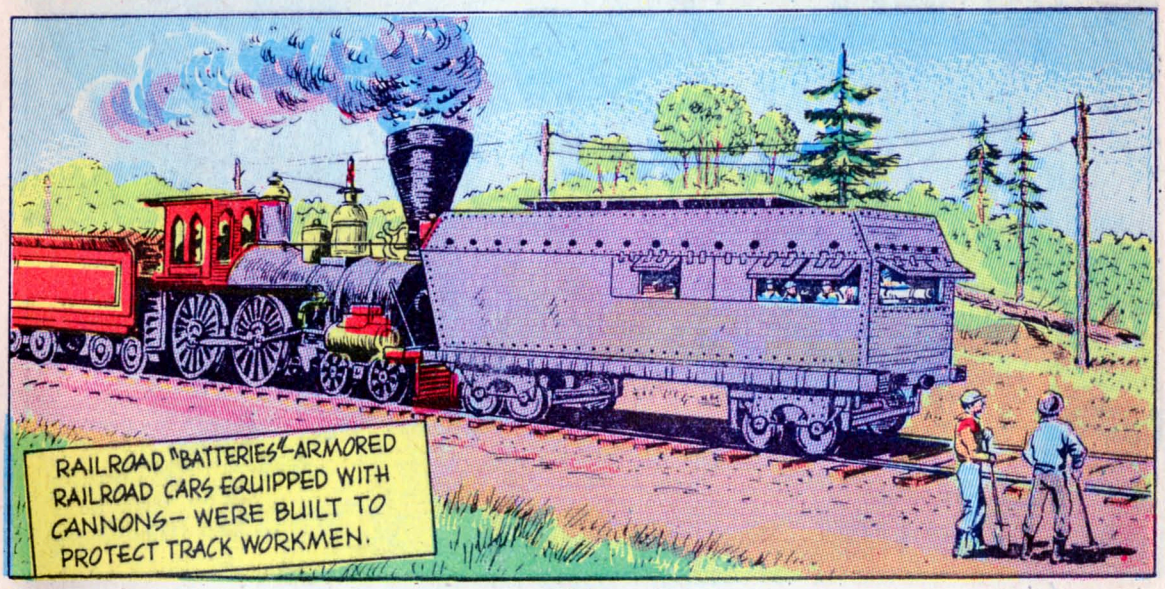

...AND THE CONFEDERATE ARMIES IN VIRGINIA CAME UNDER COMMAND OF GENERAL ROBERT E. LEE.
IN THIS CAMPAIGN, THE RAIL-BASED CONFEDERATE ARMY MADE GOOD USE OF INTERIOR LINES.

ALL AVAILABLE ROLLING STOCK WAS PRESSED INTO SERVICE. TRAIN AFTER TRAIN OF SUPPLIES ROLLED INTO RICHMOND YARDS...


...AND TROOPS WERE SHIFTED QUICKLY FROM ONE FRONT TO ANOTHER, INCLUDING THE MOVEMENT OF STONEWALL JACKSON'S ARMY FROM THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY TO THE RICHMOND SECTOR.

SPECIAL MILITARY USES OF RAILROADS WERE DEVELOPED DURING THE WAR BETWEEN THE STATES, PARTICULARLY BY THE NORTHERN ARMIES. GUNS WERE MOUNTED ON SPECIALLY-BUILT CARS AND MOVED UP TO ADVANCED POSITIONS.

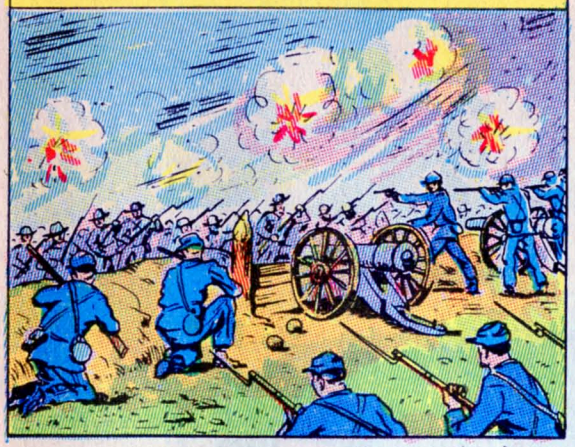
MORTARS WEIGHING UP TO 17,000 POUNDS AND FIRING 200-POUND SHELLS WERE IN USE BY FEDERAL ARTILLERY DURING THE LATTER PART OF THE WAR. MOVED EASILY AND QUICKLY OVER TRACKS BUILT AND MAINTAINED BY THE U.S. MILITARY RAILWAY SERVICE, THIS MOVEMENT OF HEAVY GUNS BEGUN IN THE CIVIL WAR HAS BEEN CARRIED OUT TO ADVANTAGE IN SUBSEQUENT WARS.


RAILROAD "BATTERIES"—ARMORED RAILROAD CARS EQUIPPED WITH CANNONS— WERE BUILT TO PROTECT TRACK WORKMEN.

ANOTHER SPECIAL USE OF RAILROADS IN WARTIME— THE DEVELOPMENT OF HOSPITAL TRAINS— BEGAN IN THE CIVIL WAR AND HAS BEEN A VITAL RAILROAD SERVICE IN EVERY WAR SINCE THAT TIME.
HOSPITAL
TRAIN

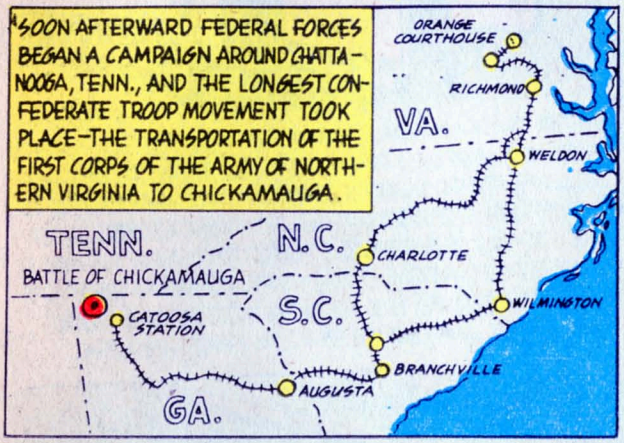
RAILROADS SERVED ARMY FIELD HOSPITALS AND, DURING SOME OF THE CAMPAIGNS, THE U.S. MILITARY RAILWAY SERVICE ESTABLISHED AND MAINTAINED ITS OWN FIELD HOSPITALS.

AS THE WAR WENT INTO THE THIRD YEAR THERE WAS HARD FIGHTING. THE NORTH WON THE BATTLE OF GETTYSBURG...

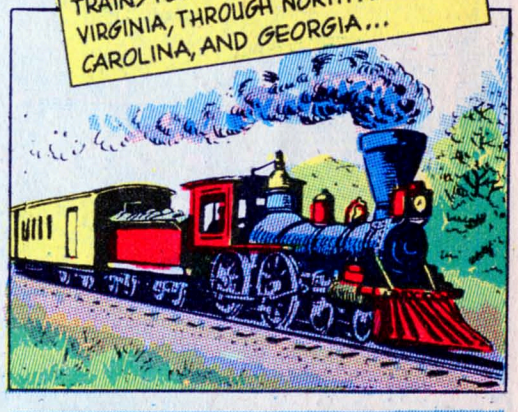


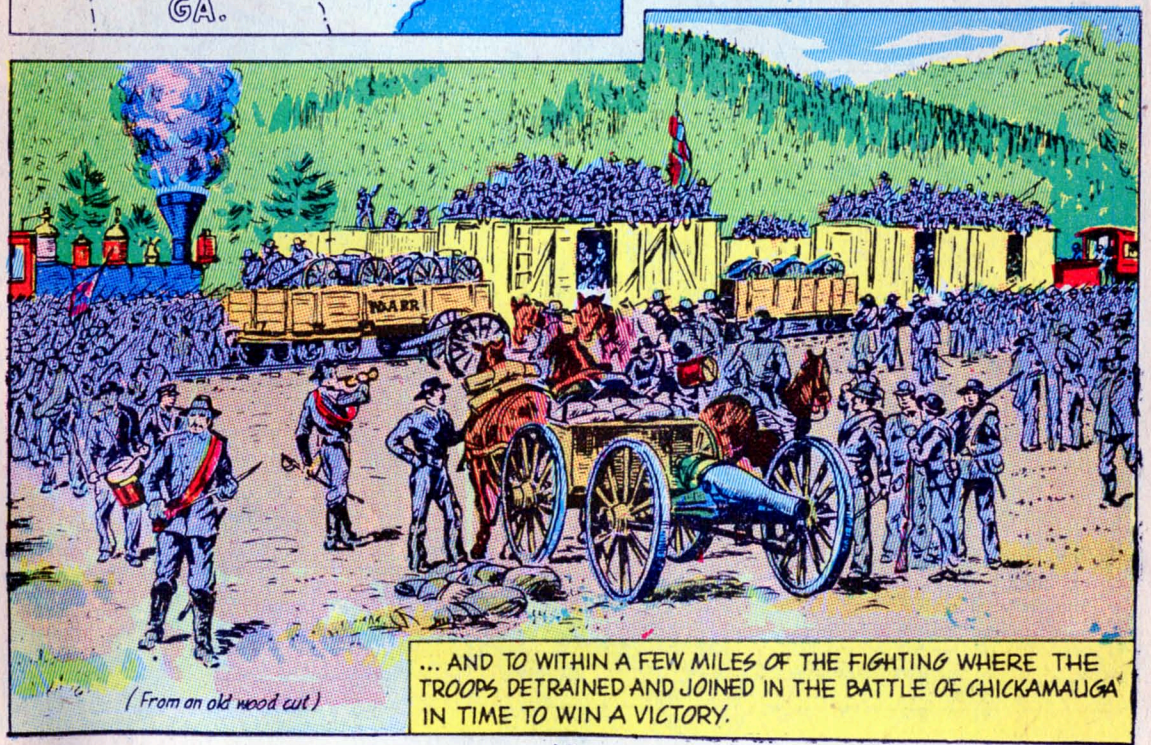
...AND ONE IMPORTANT FACTOR IN THIS BATTLE WAS THE WELL-ORGANIZED RAILROAD OPERATION WHICH KEPT THE NECESSARY SUPPLIES MOVING TO THE UNION ARMY IN GREAT QUANTITIES.

SOON AFTERWARD FEDERAL FORCES BEGAN A CAMPAIGN AROUND CHATTANOOGA, TENN., AND THE LONGEST CONFEDERATE TROOP MOVEMENT TOOK PLACE—THE TRANSPORTATION OF THE FIRST CORPS OF THE ARMY OF NORTHERN VIRGINIA TO CHICKAMAUGA.



TRAINS POUNDED SOUTHWARD FROM VIRGINIA, THROUGH NORTH AND SOUTH CAROLINA, AND GEORGIA...



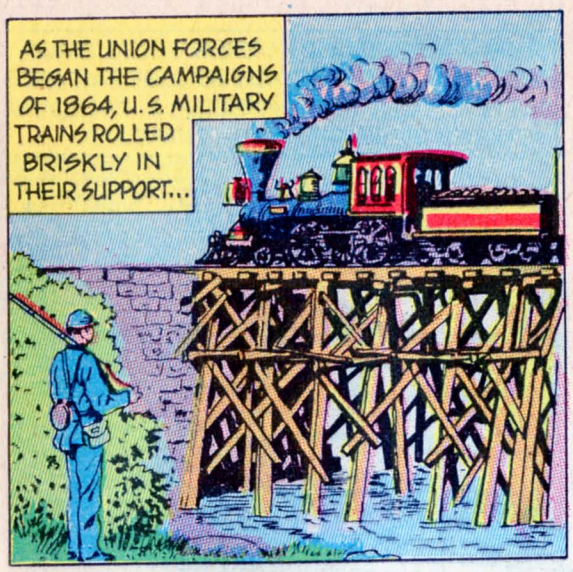


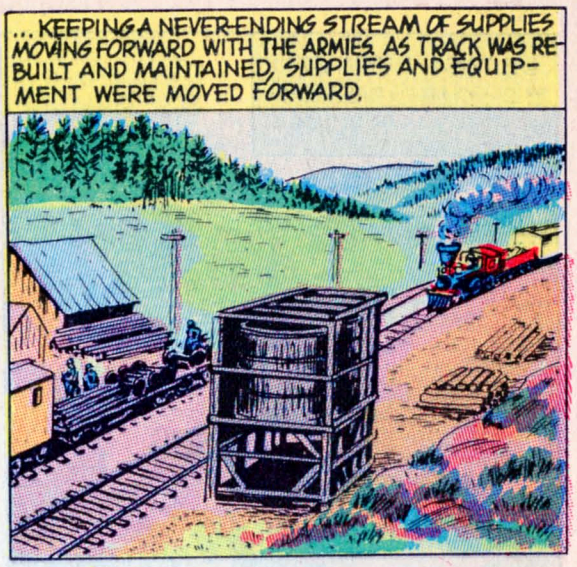
(From an old wood cut)

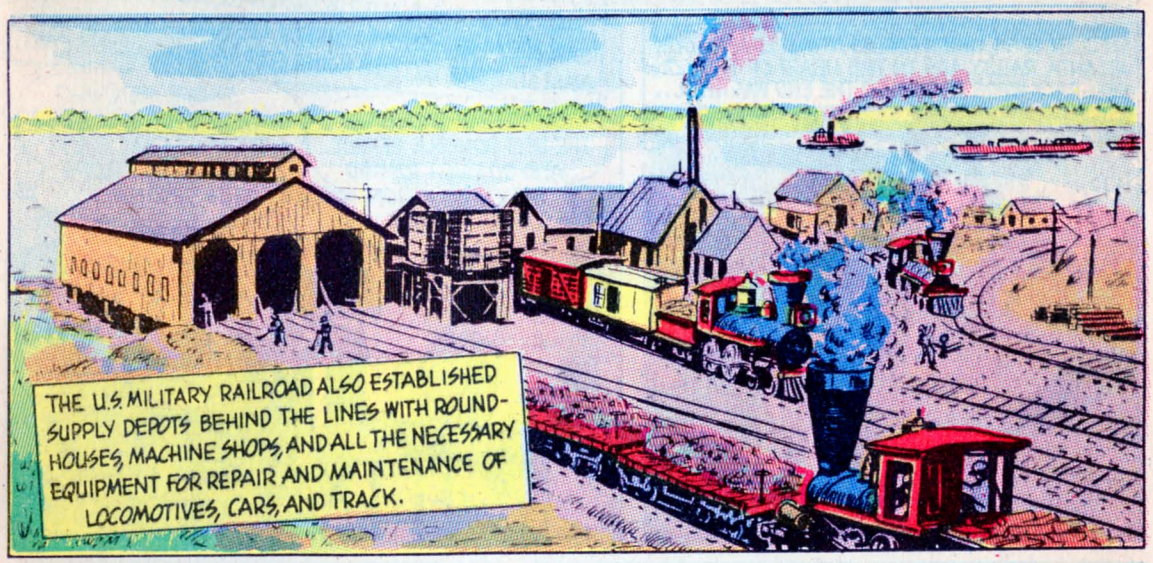
... AND TO WITHIN A FEW MILES OF THE FIGHTING WHERE THE TROOPS DETRAINED AND JOINED IN THE BATTLE OF CHICKAMAUGA IN TIME TO WIN A VICTORY.

AFTER CHICKAMAUGA, RAILROADS OF THE NORTH PERFORMED A GREAT FEAT OF MASS TRANSPORTATION. FEDERAL TROOP TRAINS ROLLED WESTWARD THROUGH OHIO AND INDIANA AND SOUTHWARD ACROSS KENTUCKY AND TENNESSEE, BRINGING TWO CORPS UNDER THE COMMAND OF GENERAL "JOE" HOOKER TO THE AID OF THE UNION ARMY AT CHATTANOOGA. SIX DAYS AFTER BOARDING THE TRAINS AT ALEXANDRIA, VA., THE SOLDIERS WERE DETRAINING AT BRIDGEPORT, ALA., 30 MILES FROM CHATTANOOGA.

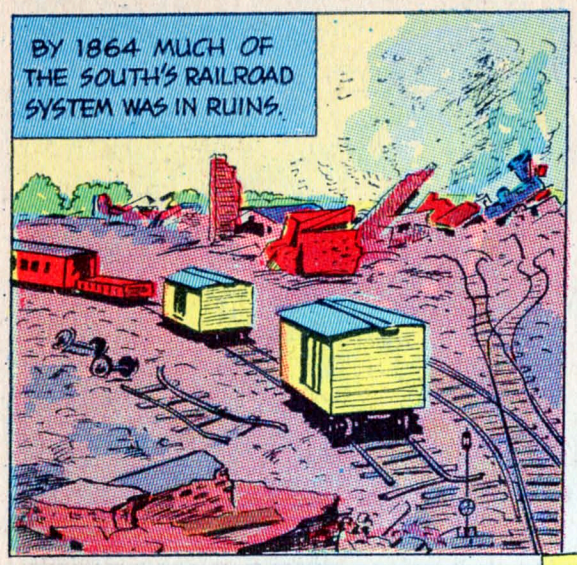
BY 1863, THERE WAS NO LACK OF RAILROAD MOTIVE POWER, CARS OR EQUIPMENT IN THE NORTH. IN WASHINGTON, MANY LOCOMOTIVES AND CARS HAD BEEN ASSEMBLED FOR USE ON THE MILITARY RAILROADS REACHING SOUTHWARD FROM THE CAPITAL.

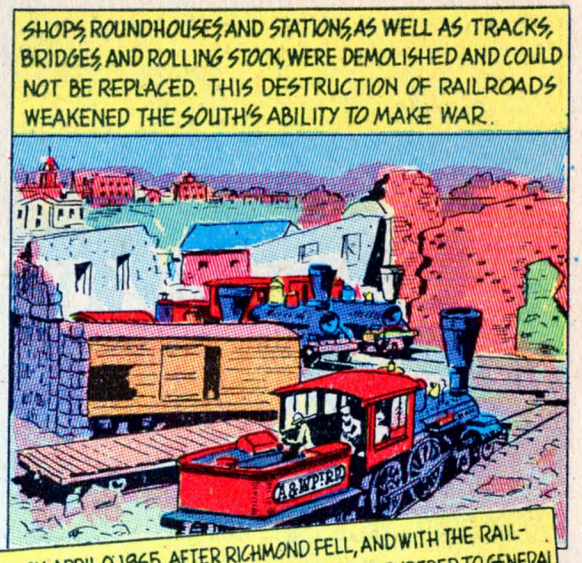

AS THE UNION FORCES BEGAN THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1864, U.S. MILITARY TRAINS ROLLED BRISKLY IN THEIR SUPPORT...

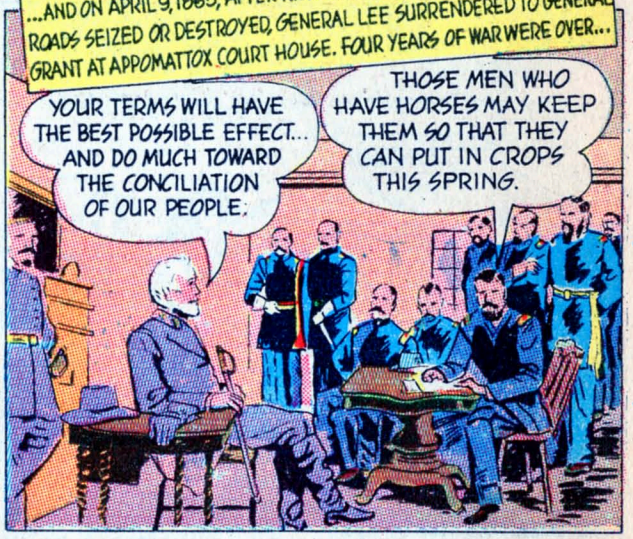

...KEEPING A NEVER-ENDING STREAM OF SUPPLIES MOVING FORWARD WITH THE ARMIES. AS TRACK WAS REBUILT AND MAINTAINED, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT WERE MOVED FORWARD.

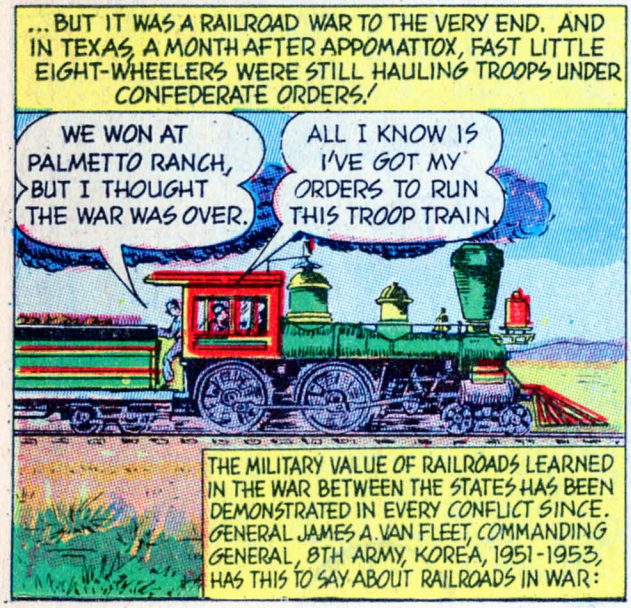

THE U.S. MILITARY RAILROAD ALSO ESTABLISHED SUPPLY DEPOTS BEHIND THE LINES WITH ROUNDHOUSES, MACHINE SHOPS, AND ALL THE NECESSARY EQUIPMENT FOR REPAIR AND MAINTENANCE OF LOCOMOTIVES, CARS, AND TRACK.

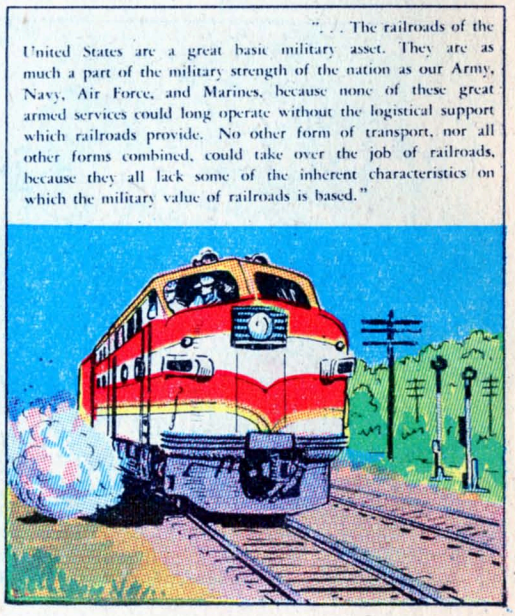
WHEN GENERAL SHERMAN BEGAN HIS CAMPAIGN IN GEORGIA, HIS SUPPLY LINE WAS THE CAPTURED RAILROAD OVER WHICH THE CHASE OF THE GENERAL HAD TAKEN PLACE—THE WESTERN & ATLANTIC. AS THE SOUTHERN FORCES RETREATED, THEY MOVED ROLLING STOCK SOUTHWARD AND DESTROYED PORTIONS OF THE TRACK, BUT THE MEN OF THE U.S. MILITARY RAILWAY SERVICE REPAIRED THE RAILROAD SO SWIFTLY THAT SUPPLY TRAINS KEPT UP WITH THE MARCHING COLUMNS.











GBP—5-60—2000M

SCHOOL AND COLLEGE SERVICE
ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN RAILROADS
TRANSPORTATION BUILDING, WASHINGTON 6, D. C.

PRINTED IN U.S.A.